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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/594,324	06/15/2000	Toshio Matsumura		8859

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EXAMINER

CINTINS, IVARS C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1724

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DATE MAILED: 03/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

mk-6

Office Action Summary

Application No.
09/594,324

Applicant(s)
Matsumura et al.

Examiner
Ivars Cintins

Art Unit
1724



-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on Jan 8, 2002
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above, claim(s) 25-31 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 16) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 17) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____ 20) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 1724

Applicant's election of Group I, claims 1-24, in Paper No. 5 is acknowledged. Because Applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)). Claims 25-31 are withdrawn from further consideration, as being directed to a non-elected invention.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 13, 21, 22 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,882,517). Chen et al discloses a porous structure (filter) for separating unwanted constituents from a fluid (see col. 1, lines 4-9), which structure comprises activated carbon (col. 9, lines 48-49; and col. 16, line 31) in combination with a polymeric binder of the type recited (col. 6, lines 21-23; and col. 18, line 3). Accordingly, this reference discloses the claimed invention with the exception of the recited inlet and

Art Unit: 1724

outlet for the filter, the exact melt index of the binder (claim 2), and the exact density of this porous structure (claim 13). However, since the porous structure of the reference is intended to be used as a filtration material, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to provide this reference material with a housing having an inlet and an outlet, in order to facilitate contact between this filtration material and the fluid undergoing treatment. Also, the exact melt index of the binder in this reference material, and its exact density are not seen to materially affect the overall operation of the reference device, or to produce any new and unexpected result; and are therefore deemed to be obvious matters of choice in design, insufficient to patentably distinguish the claims.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen et al in view of Shmidt et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,904,854). Chen et al discloses the claimed invention with the exception of the recited mixture of diverse activated carbon particles. Shmidt et al discloses an adsorbent material comprising activated carbon having different particle sizes; and further teaches (see col. 1, line 66 through col. 2, line 1) that such a composite material has low flow resistance and improved adsorption properties. Since these characteristics would

Art Unit: 1724

obviously be desirable in the device of Chen et al; it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ the activated carbon mixture of Shmidt et al in the filter of Chen et al, in order to obtain the advantages disclosed by this secondary reference for the device of the primary reference.

Claims 1-11 and 13-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 10-85729 in view of Chen et al. The primary reference discloses a filter cartridge comprising a chamber filled with activated carbon, and a hollow yarn membrane chamber. Accordingly, this primary reference discloses the claimed invention with the exception of the recited polymeric binder. Chen et al discloses a porous filter element of the type recited; and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to substitute the filter element of the secondary reference for the activated carbon of the primary reference, in order to obtain the advantages disclosed by this secondary reference for the system of the primary reference. The exact melt index of the binder employed (claim 2), the exact orientation of the two filtering elements (claim 10), and the exact density of the composite carbon filter element (claim 13) are not seen to materially affect the overall

Art Unit: 1724

operation of the thus modified primary reference device, or to produce any new and unexpected result; and are therefore deemed to be obvious matters of choice in design, insufficient to patentably distinguish the claims.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Unexamined Patent Application Publication No. 10-85729 in view of Chen et al as applied above, and further in view of Shmidt et al. The modified primary reference discloses the claimed invention with the exception of the recited mixture of diverse activated carbon particles. Shmidt et al discloses an adsorbent material comprising activated carbon having different particle sizes; and it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ the activated carbon mixture of Shmidt et al in the filter of the modified primary reference, in order to obtain the advantages disclosed by this secondary reference for the device of the modified primary reference.

Inoue et al (U.S. Patent No. 4,636,307), Kamei et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,019,252) and Harada et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,160,038) disclose similar filters comprising activated carbon and hollow fiber membrane treatment sections.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to I. Cintins

Serial Number: 09/594,324

Page 6

Art Unit: 1724

whose telephone number is (703) 308-3840. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

The fax phone numbers for this art unit are: (703) 872-9311 for "Official" faxes after Final Rejection; (703) 872-9310 for all other "Official" faxes; and (703) 872-9492 for "Draft" and other "Unofficial" faxes.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0661.



Ivars C. Cintins
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1724

I. Cintins
March 3, 2002